

Assessing the Satisfaction of Students on Grading System of Wolaita Language Major Courses with Special Reference to Regular Wolaita Language Students at Wolaita Sodo University, Ethiopia

Markos Mathewos (Asst.professor)
Wolaita Sodo University

Abstract

The main objective of the study was to assess the satisfaction and self confidence of students on grading system of Wolaita Language major courses. The research subjects were purposively selected 25 students from Wolaita Sodo university, Wolaita Language department. Two tools were used to collect the data: Questionnaire and interview. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were employed to obtain the results. The study was proved that students were happy in grading system of Wolaita Sodo University and it. The study also indicated that the students were not this much interested to improve the grading system of Wolaita language major courses as they satisfied in it and it shows that students were confident enough to work by themselves. The study disclosed that teachers were not giving relevant support to students to improve their results and it shows that they did not continuously assess the students to take optional score to improve their result. Moreover, the findings of the study approved that teachers did not use their time effectively and works for the betterment of the students' result. The study also shows that teachers encouraged the students to raise questions and to comment in their evaluation and teaching and they also advise students on how to study and ready for the exam. Thus, it is possible to summarize that students satisfied with the grading system of Wolaita Sodo University and they were confident enough to work by themselves. Hence, it is recommended that the students should be more encouraged to build their confidence regarding working independently and all stake holders all stake holders should work cooperatively to increase the satisfaction of the students regarding grading system. In addition, teachers should effectively use their time and work for the betterment of the students' result and they should fairly evaluate and treat them equally.

Keywords: grading system, legislation, Major course, satisfaction, self confidence,

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Introduction

According to Gibbs and Simpson (2002) as cited in (Gregory K, Kathryn D. & Kathryn P.2014) academic assessment is typically a measure of the performance of the individual, where the relationship between acquired knowledge and displayed performance is assumed to be representative and concordant. Educational evaluation is built upon this assessment of what students are able to demonstrate as opposed to perhaps a more desirable evaluation of what knowledge students possess or what learning has occurred (Race, 2005). Instead, performance is the factor considered to be most representative of mastery of material and thus is most heavily weighted by faculty (Adams, 2005). In academia there is a disconnect between students and faculty in expectation, perception, and reasoning behind academic evaluation, manifesting in varying perceptions of the process of grading and of what constitutes a deserved grade from the perspective of assessor and assessee. Goulden and Griffin (1997) as cited by (Gregory K, Kathryn D. & Kathryn P.2014) suggested that students believe grades to be derived using established standards more than faculty report that they actually are, reflecting both the potential subjectivity of the grading process and student misconceptions of the evaluation process. Owing to the differing roles of students and faculty in the academic environment, there is bound to be dispute regarding how grades should be appropriately and fairly assigned and what should be taken into consideration in grading. Discrepancies in expectation and perception produce a situation with ample opportunity for misunderstanding and conflict between faculty and students and may be representative of a generally distorted student perception of the purpose of academia and evaluations (Greenberger et al., 2008).

The relationship between student satisfaction and assessment performance is important in contemporary higher education, attracting much attention by teaching practitioners and academics because it may underpin powerful synergies at work in students' educational experience. Biner et al. (2002) as cited by Dong, Y. & Lucey, A. (2013) demonstrated that higher level of relative performance (telecourse performance vs. prior academic performance) were associated with student satisfaction with the technological aspects of courses, student satisfaction with the promptness of material exchange with the instructor, and overall student satisfaction. Wiers-Jenssen Stensaker & Grøgaard (2002) investigated Norwegian university students, finding that academic and pedagogic quality of teaching were crucial determinants of student satisfaction. However, other factors such

as social climate, aesthetic aspects of physical infrastructure and the quality of administrative services could not be ignored when seeking improvements to student satisfaction and opportunity for learning. Yatrakis and Simon (2002) as cited by Dong, Y. & Lucey, A. (2013) used 'self-selection' of online classes to evaluate its effect on student satisfaction and performance. In contrast to the aforementioned studies, their results revealed that while the 'self-selection' afforded to target students did lead to higher levels of satisfaction for this group, it did not make any difference to their grade (performance) outcomes in assessments.

In Wolaita Sodo University there are various faculties and colleges and in each college and faculty there are various departments. In line with this, department of Wolaita language is one the departments in college of social sciences and humanities where the research was being carried out. Hence, the main focus of the study was to investigate the satisfaction of students on grading system of Wolaita language major courses with special reference to regular Wolaita language students at Wolaita Sodo University. The grading system of Wolaita Sodo University seems better and suitable to promote students and reduce dropouts. For example: According to W S U Senate legislation (2016:120) in article 77 the mark interval from 90-100 is A+ and from 85-89 is A. The interval from 80-84 is A- and from 75-79 is B+ etc. Thus, the grade is given up to Fx and F and until these last grades, there are various grade mark intervals and so that the students have the possibility of passing and scoring better results. The most common absolute grading system in the United States is the one that assigns an A for points 90 to 100, a B for points 80 to 89, a C for points 70 to 79, a D for points 60 to 69, and an F for points 0 to 59. All of these points are from a test worth 100 points. This also shows the betterment of the grading system of Wolaita Sodo University.

The grading system of Wolaita Sodo University is relatively good and takes in to account students' benefit. But, this study emphasizes on to assess whether students satisfied or not in grading system of Wolaita Sodo University Wolaita language major courses and to evaluate the self confidence of the students to work individually. Most of the time Wolaita language students did not come to the exam room with exercise books, piece of papers other materials and this may be the course is easier for them than other courses in which were given in English media.

However, when Wolaita language students took English media common courses like introduction to psychology and other English courses they practice cheating. When they come to the exam session of common courses, lots of them bring written piece of papers or exercise books or other materials that may help them cheat the exam and they also cheat from one another. Due to these malpractices, many students do not want to gain necessary skills and knowledge in common courses by attentively following the lesson rather they simply expect grades and even need the teacher to give them extra mark. This might be true in all students of various departments, particularly on students of department of Wolaita language and literature.

The most important thing in Wolaita language major courses was the attention of teachers to help the students. Student may not this much dissatisfied with the grading system of Wolaita language major courses of Wolaita Sodo University and they may be confident enough to work independently. Teachers should support the students by effectively teaching them and giving tutorial lessons and they should equally treat and fairly evaluate students. In line with this, the study was expected to answer the following research questions:

1. Do the students satisfy on grading system of Wolaita language major courses?
2. Are students confident enough to get the score of only what they work in major courses?
3. What roles do Wolaita language teachers to play to improve the score of students in major courses?

Objectives

The main objective of the study was assessing the satisfaction and self confidence of students on grading system of Wolaita Language major courses.

Specific objectives

- 1.To evaluate the students' contentment on Wolaita language grading system in major courses.
- 2.To examine the students' self-confidence to get the score of only what they work in major courses.
- 3.To judge the role of Wolaita language teachers to improve the score of students in major courses.

3. Research methodology

This chapter highlighted the various sections as how to carry out the research and the ways of analyzing the data. Thus, the research design, place of research, subjects of the study, tools of data collection and the ways of integrating and analyzing data were discussed.

3.1. Research Design

Both Qualitative and quantitative research design was employed to explore the satisfaction of students on grading system of Wolaita language major courses and this is because both of them were more appropriate to investigate it. Besides to this, the nature of the research also invited the researcher to use both of them and so that tangible data was obtained from these designs.

3.2. Research site

The research was conducted at Wolaita Sodo university Gandaba main campus. This university is one of the 4 Public Universities in Ethiopia and it is found in administrative town of Wolaita Zone, SNNPR. It was established in 2007 G.C with first batch of 818 students. It is 330kms away from Addis Ababa through Hosana and 160kms away from the Regional Capital, Hawassa.

3.3. The research participants

The research was conducted at Wolaita Sodo university of Gandaba main campus and emphasized on three batches of Wolaita Language students. In this department, there are totally 57 students in three batches (year 1-year 3) and among them, 39 students are female and 18 students are male and from them the researcher purposively participated 12 females and 7 males by considering that they provide adequate information for the study. In the department of Wolaita language and literature, there were totally 6 teachers (2 females and 4 males) and among them 3 teachers were purposively selected for the study based on the diversity of their specialization.

3.4. Sampling Procedure

The research was conducted at Wolaita Sodo University on Wolaita language students. In the department of Wolaita language and literature, there were three batches and their total number was 57. In each batch, there was only one section and so that all three sections were selected for the study. Among them, 14 female and 8 male students from 3 sections were involved in the study. All of them were selected by using purposive sampling technique based on their first semester result. The reason for using this technique was that it helped the researcher to select the students who gave appropriate data for the study. There were 6 teachers who were in duty in the department of Wolaita language and literature and among them 3 teachers were purposively participated in the study according to their specialization. Thus, the total sample of the study was 25.

3.5. Instruments for Data Collection

Two instruments were used to collect data for the study. These were questionnaire and focus group discussion. These tools were valid as relevant and intended data was obtained through them.

3.6 Data analysis

Qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were employed in this study. This was because the data were gathered by using both the questionnaire and interview. Thus, the focus group discussion data were analyzed qualitatively and the data gathered by using a questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively. Thus, during analysis priority were given to a quantitative data i.e. questionnaire. The data of questionnaires were analyzed first and then an interview data were analyzed qualitatively and the data were triangulated with the result of the questionnaire. The quantitative data were analyzed in tables which were categorized under various titles in their relationship. The qualitative data were analyzed through discussion which was often termed as textual analysis.

4. Discussion and results

Table 1. The students' satisfaction on Wolaita language grading system in major courses.

Sn	Items	Yes		No		Some times	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1.1	I am satisfied with the grading system of Wolaita language major courses	9	75	3	25		
1.2	I need the grading system of Wolaita language major courses to be improved for the student's benefit.	5	41.6	7	58.3		
1.3	The grading system is done according to WSU senate legislation	11	91.6	1	8.3		
1.4	Grading system is fair to evaluate and promote students	7	58.3	2	16.6	3	25
1.5	The grading system of Wolaita language major courses affected my result	5	41.6	7	58.3		

f=frequency % = percentage

As can be seen from table-1, item 1.1 the majority of the respondents about 75% said that students satisfied with the grading system of Wolaita language major courses and 25% answered that they were not satisfied with the grading system.

The interview data also indicated that almost the same result. For example, almost all of the respondents said the following:

I am very happy in grading system of Wolaita language major courses because it is fair to improve students'

result. The grading system is totally taken in to students' current situations and their academic status.

From the above questionnaire and interview data we can assume that students were happy in Wolaita Sodo university grading system.

As shown in table-2.item 1.2, majority of the respondents about 58.3 % replied that it is not necessary to improve the grading system of students. This may be because students are very happy in grading system of Wolaita language major courses. Next to this, about 46.1% of the respondents replied as it is necessary to improve the grading system for the students' benefit.

Some of the interview data also supported the data found from the questionnaire and at the same time some of them did not support. For example, some of respondents said the following:

The grading system is fair, well designed and appropriate to measure the students' learning. It is better grading system and it should continue in this way. On contrary to this, few of the respondents said that the students grading system should improve.

Thus, according to the above results of interview and questionnaire it is possible to assume that the students were not this much interested to improve the grading system of Wolaita language major courses as they satisfied in it.

In table 1 item 1.3, a lot of students (91.6%) answered that the grading system of Wolaita language major courses performed according to Wolaita Sodo university senate legislation and the remaining 8.3% replied as the grading system was not according to senate legislation.

The interview data almost proved the data found from questionnaire. Let us the participants response: *I can surely say that the grading system of Wolaita language major courses implemented according to Wolaita Sodo senate legislation.*

Therefore, based on the data found from interview and questionnaire, one can conclude that the grading system of Wolaita language major courses is performed according Wolaita Sodo university senate legislation.

As indicated in table-1 item 1.4, many participants said that the grading system is fair to evaluate and promote students and 16.6% answered as it is not fair to do so. Next to this,

25% of the respondents told that it sometimes fair to evaluate and promote students. The interview data almost attended the result of questionnaire. Let us see the response:

I can confidently ensure that the grading system is fair and considered all learning abilities of the students and I am pleased in it. The university should strengthen it and think other more things to help students if necessary.

Based on the data of questionnaire and interview one can think that the grading system of Wolaita language major courses was fair and should be strengthened accordingly.

As can be seen from table 1, item 1.5, 41.6% of the respondents answered that the grading system affected their results. However, the majority of the participants i.e. 58.3% replied that the grading system of Wolaita major courses did not affect their result.

The interview data indicated that the grading system did not affect the students' results: let se the response: *The grading system of Wolaita language major courses is fair and takes in to account the students learning ability.*

So, it needs students' effort to improve their result and if they work hard, it does not affect the students' result.

Thus, based on the above interview and questionnaire we can guess that the grading system of the Wolaita language major courses did not affect the students' result.

Table-2 Examining the students' self-confidence to get the score of only what they work in major courses.

Sn	Items	Yes		No		Some times	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
2.1	I am happy to be evaluated individually	8	66.6	3	25	1	8.3
2.2	I need to be evaluated in pair	9	75			3	25
2.3	I need to be evaluated in group	8	66.6	4	33.3		
2.4	I am happy if teachers add extra mark to improve my result	4	33.3	8	66.6		
2.5	I happy to see when teachers effectively control students during Wolaita language exam room	10	83.3	2	16.6		
2.6	I never do any teaching practices in exam room	9	75			3	25

f=frequency % = percentage

As shown in table 2, item 1.2, the majority of the research subjects (66.6%), replied that they are happy to be evaluated individually and 25% are answered as they were not happy. Again 8.3 % of the respondents said that they are sometimes happy to be evaluated individually. The interview data also shows that students are happy to work individually. Let us see some of them. *I do not worry if I work individually I have the ability and confidence to work in this way.*

Based on the above interview and questionnaire it is possible to generalize that students were happy to work individually.

According to table-2, item 2.2, lots of students about 75% replied that they are happy to work in pair and 25% answered that they sometimes need to work in pair. The interview data also approved the information found

from the questionnaire. *I have no problem to work in pair because it helps me to share ideas with others.*

Therefore, based on the above data found from the two instruments, one can guess that students were pleased to work in pair.

As indicated in table 2, item 2.3, the majority of the students (66.6%) said that students are need to be evaluated in group work and 33.3% of the respondents answered that they do not want to work in group. The interview shows similar result. Some of them said in this way: *I need to work in group work as it encourages me and improves my result.* According to the data found from both tools it is possible to conclude that students needed to work in group.

In table 2, item 2.4 many students about 66.6% replied that they do not want their teacher to add them extra mark to improve their result. Again, 33.3% of the respondents answered that they need the teachers to add them extra mark to improve their result. The interview data also shows similar result as that of questionnaire. For example, said in this way. *I do not want the teachers to add me any mark. I only need the teachers to teach and explain the lesson clearly and so that I can work myself and score better result.*

Therefore, based on the information found from the questionnaire and interview, one can guess that students did not the teachers to add extra mark to them and they are confident enough to work by themselves.

As indicated in table-2 item 2.5, the majority of the respondents (83.3%) answered that they are happy to see when teachers effectively control students during Wolaita language exam room and 16.6 % said that they are not happy on students' control of Wolaita language exam room. The interview data also assured this. *I am happy if teacher effectively control students in Wolaita language exam room. Before the exam teachers should pick up and avoid a piece of paper, exercise books, and even they should carefully control so as to avoid side cheating.*

Based on the data found from interview and questionnaire, one can guess that students need the teachers to control them in Wolaita language exam room.

Table-3. The role of Wolaita language teachers to improve the grade of students in major courses

No	Items	Yes		No		Some times	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
3.1	Teachers give tutorial and make up lesson	4	33.3	3	25	5	41.6
3.2.	Teachers continuously assess the students to take optional score to improve the result	5	41.6	6	50	1	8.3
3.3.	Teachers use their time effectively and works for the betterment of the students' result	3	25	5	41.6	4	33.3
3.4	Teachers advise the students how to study and ready for the exam	7	58.3			5	41.6
3.5	Teachers fairly evaluate the students and treats them equally	3	25	2	16.6	5	41.6
3.6.	Teacher encourages the students to raise questions and to comment in their evaluation and teaching	5	41.6	3	25	4	33.3

f = frequency % = percentage

In table-3 item 3.1, the majority of the respondents about 41.6% replied that teachers sometimes give tutorial and make up lesson to improve the students result in Wolaita language major courses and 33.3% replied that teachers give tutorial and make up lesson to improve students result. On other hand, 25% of the participants said that teachers do not give tutorial and make up lesson to improve students result.

The interview data almost shows that teachers do not effectively help students. Let us see the responses:

Except very few teachers, many teachers are not helping students in various ways like giving tutorial and make up lesson for girls and weak students. They even do not advice students how to read and improve their result except insulting. They simply prepare short note and rush to cover the portion and do not care for the students' result.

Based on the above interview and questionnaire, one can assume that teachers were not giving relevant support to students to improve their results.

As can be seen from table 3, item 3.2, a lot of the research subjects about 50% answered that teachers do not continuously assess the students to take optional score to improve the result and 41.6% replied that teachers continuously assess the students to take optional score to improve the result. Again, 8.3% of the respondents answered as teachers sometimes do so.

The interview data also proved the result of the questionnaire. Some of the respondents answered the following: *Some teachers do not assess the students continuously to take optional results and to improve their results.*

Therefore, the data found from interview and questionnaire, we can conclude that teachers did not continuously assess the students to take optional score to improve the result.

As shown in table 3, item 3.3, the majority of the respondents about 41.6% responded that teachers do not use their time effectively and works for the betterment of the students' result and 25% replied that they use their time

effectively and work for the betterment of the students' result. Next to this, 33.3% of the participants said that teachers sometimes use their time effectively and work for the betterment of the students.

The interview data relatively supports the result of the questionnaire. Some of the respondents said in this way: *It is difficult to say that teachers use their time effectively because most of them do not enter the class on time. Many teachers at least late for 10-15 minutes and this affect our learning.*

Thus, according to the data found from both of the above instruments we can guess that teachers did not use their time effectively and works for the betterment of the students' result.

As can be seen from table 3, item 3.4 a lot of the research participants about 58.3 % answered that teachers advise the students how to study and ready for the exam. Next to this, 41.6% of the respondents said that teachers sometimes advise the students how to study and ready for the exam. Many of the interview data supported the result of questionnaire. Let us see below:

Yes, teachers advise us the students on easy ways of studying and to prepare them for the exam. Teachers tell us the best ways of studying for the exam is in group and pair studying. Teachers advise us to read in very settled places for concentration.

Based on this information from questionnaire interview, we can conclude that teachers play their role to advise the students on how to study and ready for the exam.

In table table-3 item 3.5, 25% of the respondents replied that teachers fairly evaluate the students and treats them equally and 16.6. % replied as teachers do not fairly evaluate the students and treats them equally. However, the majority of the respondents about 41.6 % answered that teachers sometimes evaluate the students fairly and treat them equally.

The interview data relatively supports the result of the questionnaire. Let us some of the response: *according to my view, there is something that teachers have to improve so as to satisfy the students. Teachers should be free from the gossip that they do not assess the students fairly and that they do not treat equally.*

Thus, based on the above interview and questionnaire data one generalize that teachers did not fairly evaluate and treat the students equally.

As shown in table 3, item 3.6, the majority of the participants (41.6%) answered that teacher encourages the students to raise questions and to comment in their evaluation and teaching. Again 33.3% replied that teachers sometimes encourage the students to raise questions and to comment in their evaluation and teaching and 25% of them said that teachers do not encourage the students to raise questions and to comment in his evaluation and teaching.

The data of interview supported the questionnaire. Let us see some of the responses: *Teachers always encourage us to ask questions and even to give suggestions on their teaching and evaluations.*

According to the results found from both interview and questionnaire, one can guess that teachers encourage the students to raise questions and to comment in their evaluation and teaching.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made.

- The findings of the study indicated that students were happy in grading system of Wolaita Sodo University. It also clearly shows that the the students were not this much interested to improve the grading system of Wolaita language major courses as they satisfied in it.
- The study indicated that the grading system of Wolaita language major courses is performed according Wolaita Sodo university senate legislation.
- The findings of the study clearly indicated that the grading system of Wolaita language major courses was fair and should be strengthened accordingly. It also proved that the grading system of Wolaita language major courses did not affect the students' result.
- The study indicated that students were happy to work in individually, pair and in group and it also shows that students did not want the teachers to add extra mark to them and they are confident enough to work by themselves.
- As seen from the findings the students want the teachers to control them well in exam room.
- The study disclosed that teachers were not giving relevant support to students to improve their results and it shows that they did not continuously assess the students to take optional score to improve the result.
- The findings of the study approved that teachers did not use their time effectively and works for the betterment of the students' result. The study indicated that teachers play their role to advise the students on how to study and ready for the exam.
- The study concluded that teachers did not fairly evaluate and treat the students equally. According to the study teachers encourage the students to raise questions and to comment in their evaluation and

teaching.

4.2. Recommendations

- The students should be encouraged to more build their confidence regarding working independently in Wolaita language major courses.
- Teachers and all stake holders should work cooperatively to increase the satisfaction of the students regarding the grading system of Wolaita language major courses.
- Teachers should effectively use their time and work for the betterment of the students' result and they should fairly evaluate and treat the students equally.
- Teachers should always motivate the students to work by themselves.

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